

Latest Action and Statement of Rep. Jerrold Nadler, Representing Lower Manhattan, on Yesterday's Attack

Tuesday, 11 September 2001

NEW YORK - Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), the Congressman whose district includes the site of yesterday's attack in New York, today will be meeting with Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, to receive a briefing on the damage to lower Manhattan, and touring the damaged area of New York with representatives of FEMA. More information on that will be available later today. In addition, he has been in contact with New York Senator's Schumer and Clinton, regarding any action that needs to be taken.

Below is the text of a statement by Rep. Nadler, that will be read on the floor of the United States House of Representatives, by one of his colleagues:

Mr Speaker,

Today, I am at home with my fellow New Yorkers in this terrible, dark hour, but did not want this tragedy to pass without expressing my words on this floor of the longest and greatest democracy in the world.

Like all Americans, I watched with a heavy heart the details of this attack and its aftermath emerge on the news. And like so many people, I still wait to hear word of friends and colleagues that were in the lower Manhattan area yesterday and pray for a miracle. The feelings I have of great sorrow, disbelief, and anger towards those responsible, are feelings that I hope and pray I will never have cause to feel again in my life.

My thoughts and prayers go out to the victims and their families who suffered needlessly at the hands of cowardly terrorists, and those police and firefighters who died, and who are risking their lives as this very House meets. I offer my sincerest gratitude to the many heroes who emerged yesterday, as well.

Unfortunately, we all too often forget the great sacrifice that the men and women of the New York's finest and bravest make everyday, until tragedy hits. After yesterday, with 300 or more firefighters and police feared dead, I do not believe we will ever forget how they lay their lives on the line every single day, so that they may save ours. Just as they stand up for us, we must now stand up for them. Therefore, I will introduce legislation today, which will allow for an expedited benefit payment process to the families of those police officers and firefighters who died in the line of duty yesterday, in New York or at the Pentagon.

I have spoken with the White House; which has assured me that whatever Federal assistance New York needs, it will get. I have been in constant contact with FEMA, which wanted me to stress just how important the need for blood is during this crisis. I urge all those who are able to donate blood, to call the Red Cross hotline, at 1-800-HELP NOW. If anyone has any information on either of yesterday's attacks, contact the FBI at 1-866-483-5137.

Mr. Speaker, all New Yorkers understand and feel empathy for those who lost loved ones on hijacked flights. New Yorkers, and indeed all Americans, will remember those victims at the Pentagon, for putting their lives at risk and paying the ultimate price, so that we can live our lives in freedom.

In the end, that is what this comes down to -- our freedom. To the majority of the world, our nation stands as a beacon of

hope. To those who want to crush freedom, to have people live in fear, our nation stands as a rebuke as well as a threat.

However, what those enemies of freedom fail to understand is that no amount of physical damage can kill the ideals for which this nation stands. Just as Pearl Harbor roused the sleeping giant to crush those who attacked it, this nation must crush those who have declared war on us now.

Let there be no mistake: We are at war, and have been for some time. We must make it clear, we will find those terrorists responsible for yesterday's attacks and punish them. That we will find, and punish, all those who seek to murder innocent people through terrorism. To those nations harboring and protecting terrorists, all the while pretending to be America's friend, we must make it clear to them - you are no friend of ours. If you encourage hatred of the United States, and proclaim these attacks some sort of heroic act, you are no friend of ours. If you pay tribute to terrorists, you are no friend of ours. If you do not fully cooperate with our efforts to find terrorists and bring them to justice, you are no friend of ours.

Today, we stand united, to mourn our losses, but determined to show the resolve upon which nation has always prided itself, as we rebuild. We will show the strength that can only be found in a free people. In the words of Lincoln, today, "we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth."

Rep. Nadler has served in Congress since 1992. He represents the 8th Congressional District of New York, which includes parts of Manhattan and Brooklyn.

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